may not be achieved by banning or capping the export of iron ore but by taking recourse to appropriate fiscal measures. Accordingly, export duty at different rates was imposed on iron ore from time to time. At present, the rates of duty on iron ore export is following:-

(i) Iron ore fines-fall sorts)	-	Nil
(ii) Iron ore other than fines (including lumps & pellets)	-	5% ad-valorem

Setting up of processing plants by SAIL

†1636. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) when a decision to set up processing plant in some States had been taken by the Steel Authority of India;

(b) the present status of these processing plants and the plant-wise production capacity thereof; and

(c) by when production would be started in these plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP): (a) The Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has decided to install Steel Processing Units (SPU) at various locations of the country.

(b) and (c) The SPUs are proposed to be set up at Bettiah, Manar and Gaya in Bihar, Hosihangabad, Ujjain and Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, Guwahati in Assam, Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir, Lakhimpur in Uttar Pradesh and Kangra in Himachal Pradesh.

The SPU at Bettiah was accorded final approval by SAIL in July, 08. The pipe/tube mill is likely to have a production capacity of 50,000 tonne per annum (tpa) and the other operations proposed include: Corrugation of Galvanised sheets (20,000 tpa); Cut to length facilities for Galvanised coil (20,000 tpa); and Slitting Line for Hot Rolled Coil (60,000 tpa). The civil/structural works and supply of equipment for this SPU are in progress. The production at Bettiah is expected to commence in January, 2010.

National Joint Consultative Committee on Steel

†1637. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the National Joint Consultative Committee on Steel (N.J.C.C.S.);

(b) the number and the names of members of it;

(c) the procedure to set up this Committee;

(d) the number of meetings held till date and the decisions taken therein till date;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) whether any central labour organization has recently submitted any application to become its member; and

(f) if so, the reasons for not making it the member?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP): (a) to (c) The National Joint Committee for the Steel Industry (NJCS) is an independent national level forum for settling matters related to workers and it works on bi-partite principles. NJCS consists of the representatives of Central Trade Unions i.e. AITUC, INTUC, CITU and HMS and management representatives. At present there are 37 members in NJCS, but the nominees in the NJCS keep changing from time to time.

NJCS was earlier known as the 'Joint Wage Negotiating Committee for the Steel Industry' and it was constituted in pursuance of a decision taken at the second session of the Industrial Committee on Iron and Steel in October, 1969. The Committee was formed under the aegis of the Labour Ministry.

In February, 1971, it was decided that this Committee would continue its work independently without any assistance from the Labour Ministry and would raise its own funds including contribution from the workers' representatives. After signing of the first Agreement in October, 1970, the scope of the Committee was enlarged. Since then, the Committee has been continuously functioning and successfully arrived at seven Wage Agreements for the workers of the Steel Industry.

(d) Till date 261 meetings of NJCS have been held and seven Wage Agreements have been settled.

(e) and (f) NJCS is a bi-partite forum where all decisions are taken by consensus and are binding on both parties. Requests from different trade union organizations have been received for inclusion in NJCS. Since NJCS is an independent forum, a final decision in this regard would be its prerogative.

Rationalization of work force in SAIL

1638. SHRI D. RAJA:
SHRI R.C. SINGH:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL) has resorted to rationalization of its work force and is likely to eliminate about 20,000 employees by the year 2011; and

(b) if so, how it is proposed to be done and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP): (a) and (b) The Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) is a Navratna Company with a manpower strength of 121295 as on 1/4/2009. With a view to increase competitiveness and productivity, SAIL has been rationalizing its manpower on an ongoing basis.

With rationalization of manpower, several systemic changes such as cluster system of working, flexibility in deployment, automated working, and adoption of best practices have been promoted,